

REMARKS

Summary of Office Action

The Office Action contends that drawings are required.

Claims 1-10 were pending in the above-identified patent application.

Claims 1-8 and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gee U.S. Patent No. 5,405,013 (hereinafter "Gee").

Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Dull et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,645,169 (hereinafter "Dull").

Claim 9 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gee.

Summary of Applicants' Reply

Applicants respectfully submit that drawings are not required.

Claims 1-4 and 10 have been amended. Claims 11-20 have been added. Applicants note that newly added claims 11-20 correspond to claim 1-10 (prior to the current amendment) but contain the additional element reciting "in a random orientation." Applicants respectfully submit that the subject matter of the amended and new claims is fully supported by the originally filed specification (see applicants' specification, page 3, lines 32-33, line 35 to page 4, line 2; page 6, lines 21-26). No new subject matter has been added.

The Office Action's rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicants' Reply to the Drawing Requirement

Applicants respectfully submit that drawings are not required. 37 CFR § 1.81(a) states that the applicant is only required to furnish a drawing "where necessary for the understanding of the subject matter sought to be patented." Applicants submit that a drawing is not necessary to understand the subject matter to be patented. Moreover, the Office Action does not provide any basis for why a drawing is necessary. Applicants respectfully request that for at least these reasons, the requirement of drawings should be withdrawn.

Applicants' Reply to the § 102 Rejections

Amended independent claims 1 and 10 recite a packaged product comprising flexible liquid-detergent-filled pouches and an outer container for containing a plurality of the pouches; newly added independent claims 11 and 20 recite a packaged product comprising flexible liquid-filled pouches and an outer container for containing a plurality of the pouches in a random orientation. The claims further recite that at least two of the pouches are in mutual contact, and the container comprises means for minimizing rupture of the pouches.

Gee

The Office Action rejects claims 1-8 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gee. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action contends that Gee discloses a packaged product comprising a plurality of flexible water soluble "liquid-filled pouches" (May 3, 2005 Office Action, page 2). Gee discloses a system in which pairs of water soluble bags containing "a hazardous chemical or

agricultural chemical" are packaged (Gee col. 2, lines 2-3). The bags are water soluble or water dispersible, which means that the system comprises a water soluble or dispensable film that is soluble in cold water (see Gee col. 2, lines 58-63). The bags are enclosed in an overwrap in an inner triangular shipping cell of an outer container (see Gee col. 2, lines 4-10). The bags are in contact with the surface of the three inner walls of the cell (see Gee col. 2, lines 11-13). The container comprises a plurality of cells (see Gee col. 2, lines 14-15). The bags are either singly or as a pair enclosed within a non-water soluble polymeric outer overwrap bag (see Gee col. 2, lines 53-55). That is, the bags are not all enclosed together in one overwrap bag.

Applicants respectfully submit that Gee does not show applicants' feature of a packaged product comprising liquid-detergent-filled pouches, as recited in claim 1-10. In particular, applicants' pouches contain liquid detergents which the specification describes as those which may be suitable for use "in the cleaning of clothes, dishes and other household surfaces" (see applicants' specification, page 3, lines 32-33). As discussed in the Office Action and above, in Gee, the pouches contain a hazardous chemical or agricultural chemical. Applicants submit that a detergent is neither a hazardous chemical nor an agricultural chemical. Accordingly, the cited reference does not teach all elements of the claims, e.g. liquid-**detergent**-filled pouches.

Applicants also respectfully submit that Gee does not show applicants' feature of an outer container for containing a plurality of liquid-filled pouches in a random orientation, as recited in claims 11-20. In particular,

applicants' liquid-filled pouches may be "piled in immediate proximity to one another, and are not prevented from touching each other by packaging material" (see applicants' specification, page 3, line 36-page 4, line 2). As discussed in the Office Action and above, in Gee, the pouches are only enclosed in pairs in cells of an outer container. They are not contained randomly (i.e., piled in immediate proximity to one another and not prevented from touching each other) in the outer container.

Applicants respectfully request that for at least these reasons, the rejection of the independent claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Gee should be withdrawn. The dependent claims are allowable at least because the independent claims are allowable.

Dull

The Office Action also rejects claims 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Dull. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action contends that Dull discloses a packaged product comprising a plurality of flexible water soluble "liquid-filled pouches" (May 3, 2005 Office Action, page 3). Dull discloses a system in which water soluble bags containing "agricultural chemicals" are packaged in a bag transport package (Dull col. 1, line 45). The bag transport package contains two halves (see Dull col. 2, lines 53-54). The bags are placed in the compartments of the bag transport package (see Dull col. 3, lines 43-45). A film cover layer is then placed over the bags (see Dull col. 3, lines 54-56). Thus, the bag transport package can only transport as many bags as there are compartments in the bag transport package.

Applicants respectfully submit that Dull does not show applicants' feature of a packaged product comprising liquid-detergent-filled pouches, as recited in claims 1-10. In particular, applicants' pouches contain liquid detergents which the specification describes as those which may be suitable for use "in the cleaning of clothes, dishes and other household surfaces" (see applicants' specification, page 3, lines 32-33). As discussed in the Office Action and above, in Dull, the pouches contain an agricultural chemical. Applicants submit that a detergent is not an agricultural chemical. Accordingly, the cited reference does not teach all elements of the claims, e.g. liquid-**detergent**-filled pouches.

Applicants also respectfully submit that Dull does not show applicants' feature of an outer container for containing a plurality of liquid-filled pouches in a random orientation, as recited in claims 11-20. In particular, applicants' liquid-filled pouches may be "piled in immediate proximity to one another, and are not prevented from touching each other by packaging material" (see applicants' specification, page 3, line 36-page 4, line 2). As discussed in the Office Action and above, in Dull, the bags are only enclosed in the compartments of a bag transport package. They are not contained randomly (i.e., piled in immediate proximity to one another and not prevented from touching each other) in the package.

Applicants respectfully request that for at least these reasons, the rejection of the independent claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Dull should be withdrawn. The dependent claims are allowable at least because the independent claims are allowable.

Conclusion

The foregoing demonstrates that claims 1-20 are patentable. This application is therefore in condition for allowance. A prompt and favorable action is respectfully requested.

Applicants do not believe any fee is due in connection with the filing of this Reply. However, the Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be due, or credit any overpayment of same, to Deposit Account No. 18-1945, Order No. 004041-0017.

Respectfully submitted,



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